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The President's Daily Brief

19 September 1969

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~~*Top Secret*~~

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VIETNAM

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EUROPE

The European Community Council of Ministers met this week to lay plans for a summit conference to be held at The Hague in mid-November. Although they discussed the subject of enlarging the Community, the foreign ministers made no progress. The French position on this topic is still unclear. While they assert that a real policy change has taken place since De Gaulle's resignation, Pompidou may prefer to postpone consideration of enlargement while he concentrates on domestic problems; he is still unsure in his relations with old-line Gaullists. It is also not clear how far France's partners will push her on this issue when the summit meeting is held. The Germans may press Paris to accept a specific date for opening negotiations with Britain, and the Italians still talk about

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holding out on the agricultural financing issue until the French agree to a date.

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FRANCE

Despite his understanding of the socio-economic problems facing the country, Chaban-Delmas has joined Pompidou in issuing strong warnings to French labor that "law and republican order" will be maintained. There is some evidence that the Communists are backing away from the militant posture taken by labor boss Georges Seguy in a speech earlier this week. Their leaders are determined to achieve respectability. They are concerned lest Seguy's rabble-rousing make them appear to be an irresponsible minority.

The government has already announced its readiness to discuss a wide range of economic problems aimed at dealing with worker unrest and at preventing the spread of strikes over working conditions. The settlement yesterday of the railway strike may improve the psychological climate and set a precedent for meeting other labor demands. A number of unions in the nationalized and public sectors will meet with

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management in the next few days to discuss grievances. If its recent austerity measures are to remain viable, the government is limited in what it can concede on wages, however.

Soviet Union - Communist China

Various resident press correspondents in Moscow claim that Sino-Soviet border incidents have ceased since the Kosygin - Chou En-lai meeting. Some of them add that the Chinese have agreed to hold high-level talks with Moscow while others say no reply has yet been received from Peking, but the Soviets will continue their stand-down in polemics until they get an answer.

Moscow's attempt to portray the meeting as a success shows that it wants to appear to be exhausting all possibilities for peaceful discussions. The Kremlin leaders undoubtedly think that leaking reports of Kosygin appealing for talks will enhance their image, whether the Chinese respond or not.

There has still been no Chinese reaction to the meeting other than the terse communiqué a week ago yesterday. Furthermore, Peking's polemics against Moscow have continued uninterruptedly.

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Middle East

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[redacted] 50X1

NIGERIA

We have a report that some federal military officers, restive over the stalemate in the civil war, are considering a move against Gowon. [redacted] 50X1 The removal of Gowon would place great strains on the federation because of the difficulty--if not impossibility--of finding an acceptable successor.

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